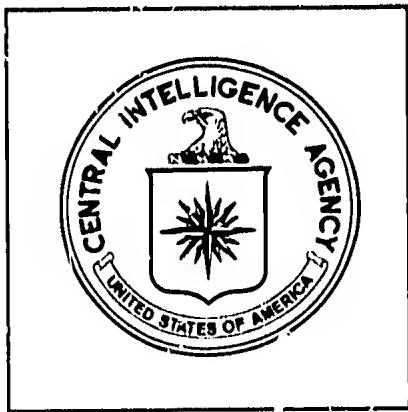


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STAFF NOTES:

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MIDDLE EAST - AFRICA - SOUTH ASIA

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Middle East - Africa Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Libya-Syria*Qadhafi Wooing Asad*

The Qadhafi regime, apparently encouraged by recent Syrian criticism of Secretary Kissinger's negotiating efforts, is doing what it can to promote President Asad's demands that Egypt and the US not abandon Syrian and Palestinian interests. In the process, the Libyans are in effect backing themselves into public acceptance of the principle of a peaceful settlement and approval of Syrian participation in the negotiations--a position opposed by the Arab "rejectionists" whom Libya has been supporting.

In an unusual exchange of courtesies, Tripoli sent Umar Muhayshi, an especially fiery member of Libya's ruling military council, to Damascus last week for anniversary celebrations of the Baath Party takeover in 1963. Muhayshi, who is well-connected in Syria, apparently was able to exact a tentative commitment from Asad to visit Tripoli later this month for ceremonies marking the British evacuation from Libya.

Muhayshi was the only guest speaker at the Syrian celebrations, and his presentation, which consisted of strident attacks on the US and Israel, drew warm applause from an amused audience. In a subsequent interview, Muhayshi elaborated on Asad's line that Washington is trying to exploit existing gaps in Arab ranks; at one point, he characterized the US as a dishonorable mediator and warned against "Kissinger's attack" on Arab solidarity. The Libyan also endorsed Asad's proposal for joint Syrian-Palestinian commands, indirectly criticized Egypt for offering dangerous concessions to Israel, and lauded Arab-Soviet ties as an "aid to concluding a peace settlement."

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Although Qadhafi has on several occasions given tacit approval of the negotiating process, Tripoli has never so openly identified itself with a major participant in the peace talks. Assad, however, certainly has no illusions about Tripoli's motives or the reliability of its support. He has always kept the Libyans at arm's length and will probably only respond to Tripoli's overtures to the extent he finds them useful in adding to pressures on Egypt. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Sudan*Southern Mutiny Over,
But Khartoum Remains Cautious*

The government appears to have restored order among troops who mutinied early this month in a remote area of southern Sudan. The mutiny seems to have resulted from an isolated dispute among former southern Sudanese guerrillas who were incorporated into the army in 1972 after a lengthy civil war. Nonetheless, the government in Khartoum continues to be uneasy about the situation.

About 140 rebellious black troops have surrendered to southern regional and provincial officials. Several hundred other black soldiers, however, have fled to the bush with their weapons, reportedly taking as hostages 27 regular troops, presumably Arab northerners.

In a public statement on March 11, Vice President and southern regional chairman Alier blamed the incident on southern troops opposed to the north-south reconciliation that began in 1972. Alier said these southerners had been spreading rumors that the former guerrillas were to be disarmed, but their efforts had been rebuffed by most troops in the garrison who remained loyal and helped restore calm.

Nevertheless, the Khartoum government has taken steps to prevent further incidents. Regular troops from the northern dominated army have taken control of the garrison, and several aircraft have been sent to a near airbase. A number of interior ministry officials from Khartoum are in the area apparently to determine whether the mutiny is a symptom of widespread anti-government feeling.

The US embassy in Khartoum reports that there apparently have been no new incidents since early March. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD/ CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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Tanzania-USSR*Cancellation of Podgorny Visit
Ruffles Feathers in Dar es Salaam*

President Nyerere of Tanzania is evidently angry over the second cancellation of a projected trip to Dar es Salaam by Soviet President Podgorny. Podgorny was supposed to make the visit in late February. The Tanzanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs doubts that Nyerere will invite Podgorny anytime soon, if ever, but Tanzania's interest in Soviet military assistance will probably keep the affair from being allowed to damage seriously Tanzanian-Soviet relations.

The Podgorny cancellations seem to have resulted more from Soviet diplomatic bumbling than from any decline in Moscow's interest in Tanzania. In fact, only last November, Moscow agreed to provide \$40-million worth of military equipment, including surface-to-air missiles, anti-aircraft guns, and artillery. A \$34-million deal reached earlier in 1974 provided for the delivery of MIG-21 fighters and for associated support equipment and training. With one eye on the Chinese, Soviet officials in Dar es Salaam have been working hard to convince the Tanzanians of the superiority of Soviet equipment and training. Chinese military assistance to Tanzania so far has totaled about \$62 million, and there is no indication that Chinese aid will be cut back in the near future.

So far the implementation of Soviet-Tanzanian military agreements has not hit any serious snags. Some 25 Tanzanian officers went to the Soviet Union for training in late February.

One probable casualty in the affair, however, is the proposed consular agreement that would increase the size of Moscow's diplomatic mission in

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Tanzania. The proposal has been viewed with suspicion by Tanzanian officials, who fear that the presence of more Soviets would enhance the possibility of espionage activity. The document is now in the legal department of the Foreign Ministry for study and may be allowed to remain there for some time as a way of showing displeasure at the Podgorny snub. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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